



ATF NIBIN Program Hits of the Week

September 22 to October 6, 2003



NIBIN Branch, Firearms Programs Division, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives

Week of 10/6: Recovery of a pistol from a passenger on a city bus and entry of ballistic evidence into NIBIN helped the Columbus, Ohio, Police Department link the firearm to three violent crimes that occurred two years prior. Police responded to a report of a passenger on the bus in possession of a firearm. The firearm was surrendered to police, test fired, and the casings entered into the IBIS system, which resulted in hits to three previously unsolved crimes. The first incident involved the vicious murder of an elderly victim who was shot in the chest during a purse snatching. A single shell casing was recovered at the scene and entered into IBIS. Two weeks later a second incident occurred involving the armed robbery of a store. The suspect entered the store, demanded money, and shot his gun several times before fleeing the scene. Shell casings were recovered and entered into IBIS. Three weeks later police responded to another armed robbery where a victim was shot in the face when the suspect stole his wallet. The shell casing was entered into IBIS. As each entry was put into the NIBIN system, the latest entry revealed a match to the previous crime's evidence, but no suspect was identified until the recovery of the firearm from the passenger on the bus. It was discovered that the passenger with the firearm was a convicted felon who had been arrested twice for possession of a handgun while on parole. He was arrested and charged with firearms violations in addition to charges for the three violent crimes.

Week of 9/29: The use of imaging through NIBIN helped the Charlotte-Mecklenburg, NC, Police Department link two shootings that occurred during carjackings. In the first incident, the suspect, who was armed with a handgun, jumped into the vehicle while stopped at a stop sign and told the victim to drive. The victim tried to call attention to his situation and swerved into oncoming traffic. The suspect threw the vehicle into park, struggled with the victim, shot him and left the vehicle. Evidence was recovered and imaged into IBIS. The second carjacking incident occurred two weeks later when two victims were stopped at a stop sign and the suspect jumped into the vehicle. The passenger in the car struggled with the suspect and was shot during the altercation. The struggle continued, and in an unusual twist, the wounded victim shot the suspect with his own weapon and retained it after the suspect fled. While the victim was being treated for his wound, the suspect arrived at the same hospital for treatment. The victim's son identified the suspect as the attacker. The suspect died at the hospital, but ballistic evidence entered into IBIS confirmed that the two shootings were linked. Police confirmed the identity of the suspect with the victim in the first carjacking.

Week of 9/22: The Columbus, Ohio, Police Department's use of the NIBIN system helped link two armed robberies and caused investigators to look at similar crimes for possible leads to the suspect. In the first robbery, the suspect entered a store and approached the counter to ring up a sale. He then pointed a gun at the owner and demanded money. While exiting the store, the suspect fired one shot at the owner and fled. The casing was recovered and imaged into IBIS. Less than two months later, another armed robbery occurred with similar circumstances of the suspect approaching the counter to ring up a sale and then pointing a gun at the owner and demanding money. Once again, the suspect fired shots at the owner while fleeing. The casing evidence was imaged into IBIS. Police and ATF began to look at other robberies in the area with similar characteristics. Two other armed robberies were identified and evidence reviewed. A suspect was identified based on fingerprints. While responding to a domestic violence call, Police arrested the suspect and found him in possession of a 9mm pistol. The pistol was test fired and identified as the weapon used in the robberies. The suspect has been charged with multiple counts of robbery, assault and weapons violations.